

ABC's of Health

Tobacco



AWARENESS...

Quitting tobacco use is the best thing you can do for your health. Tobacco use increases your chance of getting a serious **illness** or **disease**. The chance you may develop a preventable illness or disease depends on:

- ▶ The **age** you begin using tobacco;
- ▶ How often you're **exposed** to or **use** tobacco products;
- ▶ How deeply you **inhale** while smoking tobacco.

Using tobacco will **affect** your body in many ways.
For example, it will:

- ▶ **Increase** your **heart rate** 15 – 50 beats per minute faster than normal;
- ▶ **Raise** your **blood pressure** by 10 – 20 points;
- ▶ Contribute to **hardening** of the **arteries**;
- ▶ **Reduce** the **oxygen** level in your blood.

The health effects of using tobacco may lead to **deadly diseases**, such as:

- ▶ **Cancer** of the bladder, kidney, voice box, mouth, breast, throat, brain, lung;
- ▶ **Heart attack** (smoking is the leading cause of heart disease for men under 50);
- ▶ **High blood pressure**; and
- ▶ **Stroke**.

Using tobacco during **pregnancy** may have serious side effects on the baby, such as low birth-weight, nicotine addition, and possible premature birth. If you already have children, they are twice as likely to become smokers if you smoke.

BEHAVIOR



The best thing you can do for your health is to quit using tobacco. After quitting you'll notice the benefits such as:

You will look better. Your skin will be less likely to wrinkle early. Your teeth and fingers will no longer be stained. Your breath will smell better.

You will feel better. You'll breathe easier and feel more energetic. You will be able to smell and taste things better.

You will set a good example. Friends and family will see you as a role model. You'll protect your family from dangerous secondhand smoke.

You will feel more at ease in public. Every day more places become "tobacco-free." Becoming "tobacco-free" means you won't miss out on events and annoy others.

You will lower your risk of disease. Your risk of having heart disease is cut in half one year after quitting smoking and your risk of having a stroke is reduced to that of a non-smoker after 5-15 years.*

Set a "**Quit Date**" and stick to it!



CHANGE

Today is the **best day** for you to become tobacco-free. There are different methods to quit tobacco. One method requires medication. **Ask your health care provider** about this option.

You can quit by yourself, or through a program designed to help tobacco users quit. For more information about these programs, call your local office of the American Cancer Society, American Lung Association, American Heart Association, or ask your health care provider. Your local health department may also be a great resource to help you quit using tobacco.

Quitting tobacco use is not easy. However, each year over **2 million people successfully quit!**

Contact the Texas Department of Health, Office of Tobacco Prevention and Control at 1-800-345-8647 for more information on any topic related to tobacco use.

*Clinician's Handbook of Preventive Services, 2nd Edition

Texas Department of Health
1100 W. 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756-3199
www.tdh.state.tx.us

Bureau of Disease, Injury and
Tobacco Prevention
512-458-7534
www.tdh.state.tx.us/ppip/index.htm

